Cameron poses a rhetorical question whether it is a fact "that the Province is charged with the care of these mentally afflicted people" (7), the Provincial Secretary reminds him that, strictly speaking, provincial jurisdiction is only over those who have been certified to be insane. The whole point of the Reception Hospital was treatment of "those who are not certified to be insane, but are suffering from some trouble of an indefinite nature." He passes the buck, though the city officials appear equally willing to pass it back, as the interests of the mentally ill are lost in yet another jurisdictional dispute. It is as if, to enjoy state support, the mad have to suffer stigmatization; only those who can afford to, can escape it. The debate is a classic delineation of a by now all too familiar pattern in attempts to redress madness.

Perhaps, given the limited resources of the city and of other communities in the province, the only real means of achieving what the Provincial Secretary saw as the principal raison d'etre of the Reception Hospital was, as City Controller McBride expressed it, "a big building ... where big interests are concerned" (11). The Provincial Secretary himself objects that "these are local problems as far as administration goes" (11) and that "local" communities would insist on treating patients locally. McBride replies that up to half of the patients treated at the Reception Hospital have come to the city within the last three years, so presumably are a provincial responsibility. But when a provincial official reminds him that anyone who has lived for three years in Toronto is legally a resident of the city, the Controller concedes the point. He only meant there had been "a tremendous influx from the rest of the Province" (15).

Former Controller McCarthy invokes the by now apocryphal man, a not so distant relative of Daniel Clark's "A" and "B," "found insane on the street today" (15), and whom the city has to pay for, whatever the law. The Provincial Secretary rather impatiently reminds the former Controller that it is the municipality of origin that has to pay. Controller McBride takes advantage of the opportunity to defend his predecessor and reiterate his point. The man on the street, who has "wandered in from Hamilton or London or anywhere else," goes straight to the Reception Hospital. The Provincial Secretary again denies this. When McBride insists that "ninety-nine per cent of them go to the Reception Hospital" (17), the Provincial Secretary accuses him of "coming here and making a general statement that no one can check up or confirm" (17). A colleague satirizes McBride's exploitation of the apocryphal figure "who comes down from say Owen Sound and comes to the Reception Hospital because